

The Special Grand Opening Issue

Thoreau Society Bulletin

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Summer 1998

Thoreau Institute Grand Opening

Thoreau could not have received more national recognition than at the opening of the Thoreau Institute on 5 June. President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton were among the six hundred guests on hand to celebrate the opening of the research center and archive in Walden Voods. Thoreau Society

members, local preservation leaders, celebrities from the music and entertainment industry, representatives from Thoreau's original publisher, Houghton Mifflin, and many representing the influence of Thoreau came to the

Institute for this dedication.

crowd in check.

There were no red carpets, however, at this event. All the guests, including President and Mrs. Clinton, arrived via a wooded trail from the top of Pine Hill. The speaking program took place on the front lawn of the Institute under clear skies. On more than one occasion, a goshawk could be heard over the trees keeping the gathered

Ed Begley, Jr., master of cerenonies, introduced Society President Beth Witherell, who moderated the first speaking program. Archana Prasad, greatgranddaughter of Mohandas Gandhi; Michael Haynes, Civil Rights leader and friend of Martin Luther King,

Jr.; and Edward O. Wilson, Harvard entomologist and advocate for biodiversity, all spoke about Thoreau's influence on their lives and work.

The
President
and Mrs.
Clinton
arrived at
around 5
p.m. and began
a tour of the
research center. Along

with Don Henley, founder of the Walden Woods Project, they placed an original brick from Thoreau's cabin into the side wall of the research center. The three then moved to the education center to join a live video conference between

local high-school students and

students from a classroom in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Henley and the Clintons spoke with the students, answering questions and listening to their common concerns about environmental issues. The entire video conference was shown to the guests live on

screens mounted on the front lawn.
Prior to the second speaking program,
Tony Bennett performed "America the

Beautiful" *a cappella*. The second platform of speakers consisted of Kathi

Anderson, Executive

Director of the Walden
Woods Project; Don
Henley; Senators
John Kerry and
Edward Kennedy;
President Clinton;
and the First
Lady. They spoke
about Thoreau
and how each have
been influenced by
his writings.

Throughout the day, tours were given by Bradley

P. Dean, Media Center

Director, and Susan Glover-Godlewski, Curator of Collections. Almost one hundred volunteers and staff worked faithfully

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Left: Edward O. Wilson, Harvard biologist and leader in the field of biodiversity Right: President Bill Clinton Bottom: First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

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.....Elizabeth Witherell

for long hours and in hectic circumstances to make the grand opening a successful day of recognition and reflection on the writings and philosophy of Thoreau.

By the end of the day, the Clintons had spent over two hours at the Institute (an unusually long time for a Presidential visit). Edward O. Wilson concluded the day's events with an evening lecture on biodiversity and a book signing at the Trinitarian Congregational Church in Concord. The lecture was free and open to the public.

The Thoreau Institute is now open and is available for research purposes. If you would like to schedule an appointment to use the collections, please contact Susan



Don Henley receives a warm reception before addressing the guests at the Institute.



Left to right: Michael Haynes, Civil Rights leader; Archana Prasad, great-granddaughter of Mohandas Gandhi; Tony Bennett sings "America the Beautiful"

Glover-Godlewski, Curator of Collections, Thoreau Institute, 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773-3004; or by e-mail at

Susan.Godlewski

@walden.org. The

Institute is open from

Monday through

Friday from 10 a.m.

to 4 p.m.

The other way to visit the Thoreau Institute is through our Web site (www.walden.org). Many of Thoreau's writings are already on-line at the Thoreau

Home Page and many more will go up over the next year. Check periodically for new additions to the Web site. You'll also find on this site the home pages for the Thoreau Society, Walden Woods Project, and the Thoreau Institute.



Remarks by the President at Grand Opening of the Thoreau Institute

Thank you. Well, we've been here a long time in this beautiful setting, and if Thoreau were here, he would say we need more silence and less talk. But I have immensely enjoyed what has been said.

Senator Kerry has been a consistent, devoted supporter of the environment, and he was profoundly eloquent about it today. Senator Kennedy has worked so hard for projects like this one for so long now, but he has a way of telling a personal story that brings home to people who might not otherwise be engaged the importance of the moment.

You know, I thought I'd get a few brownie points for coming here and saying, because of his work here I gave Don Henley the National Humanities Medal last year. But that's nothing compared to Ted Kennedy coming here and calling him the "big fish" and the "distant drummer" at the same time. (Laughter and applause.)

I would very much like to thank all the people who Don mentioned. I know Ed Begley, Jr., and Tony Bennett were on before—they've been good friends of ours. I thank Jimmy Buffett and Joe Walsh and

all the musicians and other friends of Don who have helped. I thank you, Kathi, for your magnificent work. And I'm grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for supporting this project. And I thank you all for clapping when we said we weren't going to let it be done away with, along with the NEA. (Applause.)

I'd like to recognize two people who aren't here today, but who played an important role in getting this endeavor of the ground with Don—the late Paul Tsongas and the late Michael Kennedy.

Thank you, to them. (Applause.)

Hillary and I got to walk a little along the path coming down here today. It's very rustrating being where we are now because back when we had real lives, we used to walk in the woods a lot. (Laughter.) And so to be able to come here and only be able to walk 200 yards so that our friends with the cameras could at least get a good picture so the American people could get a real feel for the magnificent. work that's been done here, it winds up almost being more real to them than it is to us sometimes. (Laughter.) But it was enough just to see what moved Thoreau to move here on July 4, 1845, so that he could live deeply and deliberately.

In a way, he was engaging in his own experiment in independence, in the finest tradition of American citizenship. A lot of you know that Thoreau was a friend of Emerson, who talked about our Revolution as the shot heard 'round the world. In many ways, Thoreau's sojourn here at Walden was also a shot heard 'round the world. And it continues to echo today. That's why, as Hillary said, we have to, all of us, support saving it, along with our other national treasures.

I want to reiterate something Don said in a rather delicate, soft, Southern fashion—they need more money here. (Laughter.) And since we'll probably be on television, if anyone within the sound of my voice—(laughter)—whoever read Thoreau, who was ever inspired by his writings and what he stood for—we have to raise a \$12 million endowment and pay off a construction loan—send a check. You'll be proud you did. Thank you. (Laughter and applause.)

Well, let me get back to the point I mentioned. Thoreau has echoed over the decades and now more than a century. And what do we have to learn from him and what does it mean in 21st-century terms? First, we have to live in harmony with nature. What does that mean? That's one thing for one guy living on a pond—you've got 260 million people in this country; they can't do that. What does it mean?

For us, it means that we have to completely give up the notion that we can only grow our economy if we destroy the environment and we'll just do it little by little. We have to learn a whole new way of thinking so that we grow our economy by improving the environment and living in greater harmony with ourselves here in this country and around the world. It is a fundamental insight that Americans of all political factions, all backgrounds, all walks of life must embrace. (Applause.)



Second, in an era where for the first time in history more people on the globe live under governments of their own choosing than do not, the first time ever a majority of people live under governments of their own choosing, it is well to remember that oppression still lives in the world and that there is a great deal of tension and, as the Good Book says, wars and

We must not forget both the power and moral superiority of civil disobedience over violence in the face of injustice.

rumors of war. We must not forget both the power and moral superiority of civil disobedience over violence in the face of injustice.

As Hillary said, Dr. King, Gandhi, Mandela, all were moved by the insights of Thoreau. We must not forget that today. We must not forget for a moment the value of self-reliance; nor must we forget the fact that Thoreau came here and wrote

about solitude, that he learned more about his fellow human beings and the proper relations among people from his solitude because if he had too much contact with other people, he thought you came to take too much for granted and frittered too much away. We must be both self-reliant and interdependent. And that is a lesson that Thoreau learned that we can learn from him today. And in a world that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller, it is a very important lesson, indeed.

Finally—I love this quote so I want to close with it. We have to understand that in a fundamental moral way we are interconnected not only with nature, but with all other people, and that any attempt to define ourselves in a way that elevates us at someone else's expense—any effort anywhere in the world by people to put themselves in a group that can only succeed if they're putting someone else down is wrong and, in this world, unaffordable.

Listen to what Thoreau said: "Let us settle ourselves and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of prejudice and delusion till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place which we can call reality."

It is a great mistake to think this man was just a dreamer. Like all truly wise people, he understood that altruism was the ultimate form of enlightened self-interest;—that no one can pursue self-interest and material things devoid of a heart or a spirit.

Today we still have a whole lot of "mud and slush of prejudice and delusion" in this and every other society. With all our prosperity we still can't afford it; there is too much to be done.

So let us hope and pray that Walden Pond will flourish. Let us

hope and pray that people will come to these woods forever from now on, to learn not only more about themselves and their relationship with nature, but the proper order of human society and the responsibility of every citizen to preserve it. If that happens, Don Henley and all of his cohorts will have given an astounding gift to America's future.

Thank you and God bless you.

Photos accompanying Grand Opening article and President's Remarks by Dave Ganoe

his year's Annual Gathering was once again extended to almost four whole days of activities beginning Thursday, 9 July and ending around noon on Sunday, 12 July. The one major change this year was the return of the Saturday morning business meeting, held last year on Sunday at the Concord Academy, to First Parish Church. Approximately 120 people registered for this year's gathering, with even more participating in some of the events separately.

Business Meeting

On Saturday morning, members gathered in the sanctuary of the First Parish Church for the past year, addressed some of the Board's responses to members' concerns about the governance of the organization.

One of the most important responses the Board is now making is a change in the bylaws that will not only allow members to vote, but will restructure the voting process to make it far more democratic than it has ever been. Voting proce-



The Annual of the Tho

Left to right: Tom Harris presents the Thoreau Society Medal to Paul Brooks at First Parish Chui State Reservation. Photo by Karen Merrill; Members Sargun Tont, Gordon Boudreau, and Julia Institute by the President and First Lady. Photo by Sarah Harris; Joe Gilbert and Dave Ganoe tal address at First Parish Church. Photo by Thomas E. Harris; Susan Glover-Godlewski leads a tour their morning excursion. Photo by Kathleen Nigro

the annual business meeting of the Society. Bob Galvin reported on the finances and Wes Mott and Joel Myerson reported on the Thoreau Imprint series with Houghton Mifflin and the reprint series that the Society has undertaken. Joe Wheeler gave a report on the status of the Thoreau Birthplace and the formation of the Thoreau Farm Trust to oversee the renovation of the house.

Tom Harris read the Presidential Report to the Membership on behalf of Beth Witherell, who had to miss this year's gathering because of a neck injury. The address, in addition to highlighting the accomplishments of the Society over



dures were handed out at the meeting and have been mailed to the entire membership for approval.

Discussion of voting procedures and various . issues facing the Society took place for over an hour before the meeting adjourned.

Workshops

The 1998 Annual Gathering workshops presented a wide variety of topics for participants to choose from. Included in this year's program of workshops

were discussions on education, philosophy, computer databases, and walking (both the physical and the literary).

Susie Carlisle, a participant of the Thoreau Institute seminar "Thoreau's World and Ours," presented "Wild Walking at Night," a discussion on the use of

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hoto by Thomas E. Harris; Poet Andy Levesque reads in the Tsongas Gallery at Walden Pond koehler inspect a brick from Thoreau's house at Walden, placed in the outside wall of the reak in front of the Institute. Photo by Sarah Harris; Max Oelschlaeger delivers the keynote te Henley Library. Photo by Sarah Harris; Bottom: Members rest atop Mt. Wachusett during

Thoreau's journals to investigate particular phenomena.

Society board member Joe Gilbert presented "A Semester at Walden." The workshop gave an overview of the fifteenweek college semester of experiential learning in the heart of Walden Woods. Three students who participated in this program and spent their summer working for the Thoreau Society and Walden Woods Project helped Gilbert present a slide show from the semester.

Leslie Wilson, Special Collections Librarian at the Concord Free Public

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Annual Gathering, from page 5

Library, led tours of the of the Thoreau collection at the CFPL.

Len Gougeon and the Emerson Society developed a panel discussion on "Emerson: Influences and Resonances." Participating in this discussion were Phyllis Cole on Emersonian Individualism, Joan Goodwin on Sarah Ripley's effect on Emerson, and Sallee Engstrom on Emerson and Charles Finney. Bradley P. Dean, Thoreau Institute Media Center Director, presented the "Thoreau Database Project." This workshop discussed how members can participate from their own homes on the database project currently taking place at the Thoreau Institute. Sandra Petrulionis discussed issues related to Thoreau's manuscripts in her workshop "Thoreau Edition: Editing Thoreau's Works." Sargun A. Tont, who traveled from Turkey to participate in this year's Annual Gathering, presented "Was Thoreau a Better Saunterer than Rousseau?" a workshop concentrating on philosophical, literary, and ecological thematic elements found in Thoreau's "Walking" and Rousseau's Reveries of a Solitary Walker. Continuing on the theme of "Walking," Bernhard Kuhn led a groupreading of the essay. Finally, a workshop was held to discuss plans for next year's annual gathering. Next year marks the 150th anniversary of the first publication of A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers and "Resistance to Civil Government" ("Civil Disobedience"). In preparation for this celebration, Executive Director Tom Harris led a discussion to gather ideas and suggestions.

Outdoor Activities

This year's outdoor activities were blessed by great weather and many enthusiastic participants. The activities began Thursday morning with a canoe trip down the Concord River to Great Meadows, led by Dave Ganoe, and an excursion to Mt. Wachusett and Fruitlands Museum, led by Chris Nelson. The Concord Museum led a walking tour of Concord, which took participants through historic Concord Center and through the Museum's new exhibits.

Dave Ganoe took members back on the river on Friday, this time heading upstream to Fairhaven Bay on the Sudbury River. Steve Ells guided a group on a

nature walk through Estabrook Woods, and Tom Potter and Karl Werner led a bird walk in the Great Meadows.

Evening Performances and Lectures

The evening activities of the 1998 Annual Gathering started on Thursday, July 9th, with a piano concert by Ken Pederson, a pianist and composer whose unique style has been described as "Classical New Age." The two-hour performance included compositions taken from his newly released album Walden. "Thoreau had such a love for nature and also brought along a richness of ideas it's a perfect combination. I wanted to do a New Age CD that was true to feelings of peace and repose, but one which had a basis in ideas."

Peter Alden, a local naturalist and author of the newly released National Audubon Society's Field Guide to New England, gave a lively slide show and lecture on Friday evening at the Masonic Temple, formerly the school house Thoreau taught in after his graduation from Harvard. Alden is the principal author of several field guides as well as the organizer of the Concord and Lincoln Biodiversity Day.

With the turn of the century less than two years away, Max Oelschlaeger's keynote address, "Thoreau at the Millennium," was a timely lecture. Oelschlaeger is a professor of philosophy at Northern Arizona University whose recent works include The Idea of Wilderness (Yale, 1991), Caring for Creation (Yale, 1994), Postmodern Environmental Ethics (SUNY Press, 1995), and Texas Land Ethics, with Pete A.Y. Gunter (UT Press, 1997).

Prior to the main lecture Saturday night, the Thoreau Society Medal was presented to Paul Brooks, noted author and long-time editor and former Vice President of Houghton Mifflin. Brooks is the second recipient of the medal which was established by the Society to honor those individuals and institutions that have made significant contributions toward Thoreauvian principles. Brooks has been a contributing editor to Audubon Magazine and Living Wilderness and has contributed to numerous other journals including Atlantic Monthly and Harper's. He was the long-time editor of Rachel

Carson, including her most famous work Silent Spring. Brooks was selected to receive the award for his significant contributions to wilderness literature and conservation. Other honors and awards Brooks has received include the John Burroughs Medal (1965) for Roadless Area, a distinguished book of natural history, and the Walter A. Star Award from the Sierra Club in 1977, honoring "the continuing, active work and support of the Club by a former director." Society member and local Concord resident Peggy Brace gave a warm introduction highlighting Brooks's distinguished career.

Sunday morning started off with a poetry reading by Andy Levesque in the Tsongas Gallery at the Walden Pond State Reservation. From there participants went canoeing on the pond, walked in the woods of Lincoln, and hiked up to the Thoreau Institute for a tour of the new research facility. Bradly P. Dean, Media Center Director, and Susan Glover-Godlewski, Curator of Collections, displayed the Institute's treasures and plans in a series of walk-through tours.

> "I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor." Walden

President's Column

Elizabeth Witherell

This summer included two exciting Thoreau Society events: the grand opening of the Thoreau Institute on June 5, which is the focus of this edition of the Bulletin, and the Annual Gathering, which began on July 9 and concluded on July 11.

For me, the Grand Opening was a oncein-a-lifetime event: all of the Eagles, Tony Bennett, both of the Senators from Massachusetts, the President of America and the First Lady, and several hundred Society members and invited guests, all celebrating the vision of Henry Thoreau! I had the privilege of introducing the first three speakers of the afternoon: Archana Prasad, Mohandas Gandhi's great-granddaughter, and the Reverend Michael Haynes, a close associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, who are both witnesses to and examples of lives lived in the spirit of Thoreau's commitment to principle and justice, and Professor Edward O. Wilson, who works in the tradition of Thoreau as a scientist and environmentalist.

Don Henley and Kathi Anderson planned and carried out this extraordinary event, which maintained its focus on Thoreau from beginning to end. Tom Harris coordinated Thoreau Society contributions, which included not only the Thoreauvian expertise of many of our members, but also the volunteer staff that provided support for the day's activities. All of the members of the Board of Directors and of the Thoreau Society staff are proud to be involved in the Thoreau Institute, and we thank Kathi and Don for their dedication to this grand idea.

The excitement of attending the grand opening was balanced for me by the disappointment of not being able to return to Concord for the Annual Gathering. I had injured my back in June, and I underwent successful surgery at the time of the meeting. Thanks to all who expressed their good wishes at the time of the meeting and afterwards, and thank you for the beautiful flowers.

The most important consequence of the July meeting was a new version of the bylaws; by now, you will have each received a copy of this new version with a ballot. The Board established the Committee on Nominations and Elections in direct

response to members who wanted to play a larger part in governing the Society. If you want to help choose the nominees for next year's ballot, put yourself up for election for this committee. Or nominate another Society member who is interested in helping to make these important decisions. In the Fall Bulletin, we will call for nominations for the offices that will be open in 1999, and the members of the Committee on Nominations and Elections will begin the work of selecting a slate.

Let me just say a word or two about the by-laws in general. Members of the Board—Bob Galvin in particular—have spent a great deal of time and energy on this document. We have presented it to you in good faith, convinced that the by-laws place much more responsibility in the hands of the members than they have had before, but recognizing that they are not perfect. By-laws are always a work in progress, and as soon as this version has been accepted I will establish a By-Laws Committee to receive and discuss concerns about the by-laws and propose changes.

Members will be pleased to learn that Tom Harris has become the Society's Executive Director, and that Mike Berger has accepted the editorship of the *Bulletin*. Mike contributed to this issue and will take over full responsibility for the Fall *Bulletin*.

Here in Santa Barbara, we have been proofreading the text of Journal 6, which begins on March 9 and ends on August 18, 1853. During this period, Thoreau describes two important milestones in his life that I thought you might find interesting. One involves his understanding of the natural world: before he "had learned The numbers & names of each order," he writes, he had expected that Concord contained such a wide and diverse variety of birds "as not even the completest museum of stuffed birds of all the forms & colors from all parts of the world comes up to." The other, more mundane and also more amusing, is that all of his life he had been tying his shoelaces in "what is called a Granny's knot"; on his own he discovered the square knot, and "from that time my shoe strings have given me no trouble except sometimes in untying them at night."



Please Note:
Regular features of the Thoreau
Society Bulletin including the
Thoreau Bibliography and Notes &
Queries will return with the fall bulletin which will be mailed by midNovember. The fall bulletin will be
under the new editorship of Michael
Berger. All submissions of articles,
Notes & Query items, and bibliographical notes should be sent to
Michael Berger, 7823 Shadowhill
Way, Cincinnati, OH, 45242 or by email to bergermb@email.uc.edu.



A Conference on Thoreau's Natural Philosophy



Sponsored by Boston University's Center for Philosophy and History of Science

Thursday, November 12, 1998

Terrace Lounge George Sherman Union 775 Commonwealth Avenue

Moderator: Robert S. Cohen, Boston University

Morning Session: 10 a.m.-12 noon

Laura Dassow Walls, Lafayette College "A Material Faith: Thoreau and the Science of Life"

Alfred I. Tauber, Boston University
"Thoreau's Notion of Time: An Ontology, a Metaphysic, an Ethic"

Afternoon Session, 2-5 p.m.

Lawrence Buell, Harvard University
"The Egocentrists' Thoreau"

Leo Marx, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
"The Ecocentrists' Thoreau"

Daniel Peck, Vassar College "Thoreau's Landscape: Two Visions of Nature"

For further information, contact Alfred I. Tauber, Center for Philosophy and History of Science, Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215. Telephone: (617) 353-2604. Fax: (617) 353-6805. E-mail: atauber@bu.edu.

We owe a special thanks to the following people for their work this summer in the Society's office:

Ashleigh Fines Elizabeth Grant Chris Nelson

Thanks also to those who have volunteered their time:
Nancy Gallagher
Mia LeMay

If you would-like to volunteer with the Society, either in the office or over the Internet, there are several projects that you can participate in. Please contact Tom Harris at (781) 259-4750 or by e-mail at Tom.Harris@walden.org.

The Thoreau Society Bulletin is published quarterly by the Thoreau Society.

Board of Directors:

Kenneth Basile; Ronald Bosco; Robert Galvin; Joseph Gilbert; Jayne Gordon; Ronald W. Hoag, **Treasurer**; John Mack; Wesley Mott; Joel Myerson, **Secretary**; Thomas Potter; Daniel Shealy; Shirley Van Clay; Elizabeth Witherell, **President**

The Thoreau Society, Inc., is an international not-for-profit organization founded in 1941 to stimulate interest in and foster education about the life, works, and philosophy of Henry David Thoreau.

To fulfill its mission, the Society:

- supports programming for the Thoreau Institute, in partnership with the Walden Woods Project;
- sponsors various Thoreau-related excursions and events throughout the year;
- owns and operates the Thoreau Society
 Shop at Walden Pond, a visitor's center
 with a bookstore and gift shop located at
 the Walden Pond State Reservation;
- holds a four-day annual gathering each July in Concord, Massachusetts; and
- publishes the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, Concord Saunterer, and other Thoreaurelated material.

Membership in the Society includes subscriptions to its two publications, *The Concord Saunterer* (published each autumn) and the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* (published quarterly). Society members receive a 10% discount on all merchandise purchased from the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond and advance notice about Society programs, including the annual gathering. Contact the Thoreau Society administrative offices in Lincoln, Massachusetts, for membership information (address below).

Thoreau Society Directory

Communications relating to *The Concord Saunterer* should be addressed to Ronald Wesley Hoag, Thoreau Society, Inc., Department of English, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353, U.S.A.; tel: (252) 328-6580; fax: (252) 328-4889; e-mail: enhoag@ecuvm.cis.ecu.edu.

Inquiries about merchandise (including books and mail-order items) should be directed to Michael Kinsella, Retail Director, Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond, 915 Walden Street, "Concord, MA 01742-4511, U.S.A.; tel: (781) 259-4770; fax: (978) 287-5620; e-mail: Shop@walden.org.

All other inquiries and communications should be directed to the Thoreau Society, Inc., 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773-3004, U.S.A.; tel: (781) 259-4750; fax: (781) 259-4760; e-mail: ThoreauSociety@walden.org.

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